

What You Can Expect during the Family Assessment and Planning Team (FAPT) Process

The local FAPT process is initiated through several different means. A family may self-refer their child to the FAPT. Many families entering the FAPT process have been assisted by a FAPT agency partner such as Social Services or the Community Services Board. When appropriate, the agency case manager working with your family may contact the local CSA Office to request a FAPT meeting for your child. Children are also referred to the FAPT by the court.

The Commonwealth of Virginia and local governments share the cost of services funded through the Children's Services Act (CSA). Effective January 1996, Virginia law requires you as your child's parent or legal guardian to contribute toward the cost of services based on your ability to pay. More information regarding co-payment requirements will be discussed with you prior to your FAPT meeting.

Every effort will be made to hold the FAPT meeting at a time that is convenient for you. FAPT meetings take place at the Department of Social Services, 320 Hospital Drive, Warrenton, Virginia. We encourage you to attend all FAPT meetings held for your child. You may bring family members or friends for support. Professionals working with your child may also attend the meeting. When you arrive at Social Services please check in with the receptionist. A member of the FAPT or your child's case manager will come to the reception area and escort you to the conference room at the appropriate time.

The FAPT Chair will begin the meeting by having everyone in the room introduce themselves. All persons present for the meeting will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement. This form also serves as a record of meeting attendees. The meeting will last approximately thirty minutes.

Your case manager will provide the team with a brief family history and review an initial service plan known as an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP). The IFSP is a written document that contains information about the strengths and needs of your child and family, services that have been provided in the past, services currently provided, and recommendations for services in the future. Services may be provided directly, provided through referral to other community resources, or purchased through approved providers. The duration of services will be for a planned period of time based on the needs of your child and family.

You will be given an opportunity to express your concerns and add any information you believe is important. The professionals working with your child and family will add any comments or information they believe would be relevant to the decision-making process. You are a valued participant in the meeting. You are encouraged to:

- Share your child's strengths with the team,
- Bring pictures of your child if he/she is not attending the meeting,

- Ask questions and receive as much information as possible about services, programs, and resources for your child and family,
- Ask for explanation of new or unfamiliar words and phrases, and
- Bring evaluations and other professional reports regarding your child,

After open discussion of the information presented, services requested, and resources available, the FAPT assesses which services are most appropriate and may amend the IFSP submitted by the case manager. If the parent or legal guardian is in agreement with the finalized IFSP as presented, a vote is then taken by the FAPT to approve and implement the IFSP. The parent or legal guardian is then given the opportunity to sign at the bottom of the confidentiality agreement that he/she agrees or does not agree with the implementation of services recommended in the IFSP. If the parent chooses not to sign agreement to the service plan, no services will be implemented, unless services have been ordered by the court.

Once services have been approved our providers make every effort to accommodate each family's unique scheduling needs and other priorities. In the unusual event of service delivery problems, please contact your case manager. With your help we can ensure services provided to all children and families remain the highest quality services available.